

THE  
**SABBATH SCHOOL VISITANT.**

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ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

The school at Geneva is at present in an interesting state. Some time since, two of the teachers became serious, and soon obtained hope of having passed from death unto life. These were followed by many others in the village, and the cry soon became general in the society, "What shall I do to be saved?" The meetings were crowded, and the work was deep and powerful. We learn that the revival still continues, and that many are its hopeful subjects. The Presbyterian and Methodist churches seem to share equally in the blessing.

In Whitesborough, as is known to most of our readers, there has been for some time, a revival of religion. The principal means of exciting it, are stated, by the Rev. Mr. Frost, to have been, the Bible Classes and the Sunday School. Some of the children in the latter, we are informed, and several members of the former, have become the hopeful subjects of Divine grace. The Presbyterian and Baptist Societies are partakers of the blessing.

From the American Missionaries at Ceylon, we have the most gratifying accounts of the success of the gospel in their schools. Mr. Winslow states, that the number at the different stations, who give evidence of a change of heart, is about EIGHTY; and most of these are quite young.

At a late meeting of the London Sunday School Union, the Rev. Philip Falle, who had established several Sunday Schools in France, stated, as an evidence of their benefit, "that the children belonging to them, were found in different fields, in groups of six or twelve, on parts of the Sabbath, for many hours, while one in the middle read the Bible, and the others endeavored to explain it. He thought one of the first ways of reviving the churches in France, and on the Continent, was by means of Sunday Schools. In one of his schools, at a small village, there were about forty children, and in another, at a larger place, 160; in both of which there were a great number, who could not read at all; yet many of them knew the whole Gospel of Matthew. There were many who had learnt the whole Sermon on the Mount, in three months, though they could not read; for they went about the village, and offered any thing they happened to have, in order to get the verses repeated, that they might be enabled to commit them to memory."

At a late general meeting of a Sunday School Union in England, two things were particularly noticed in the report: One was, "that a general 'spirit of grace and supplication' from on high, has been poured out on the teachers, and the other was, the very happy and striking reaction, which, in some cases, has been produced on the minds of the parents by the advantages their children derive from

Sabbath school instruction. Of the latter circumstance, the following fact is a pleasing instance. "This lad," says a superintendent, "I have observed for his attention to his teacher and general steadiness of behavior at school. One Sabbath after he had repeated his lesson to me, I asked him if he thought he had received any benefit from attending the school? He hesitated some time, and then answered with a pleasing modesty, 'If I have not, Sir, one of my relatives has, for since I have belonged to the Sunday School, I have got tickets enough to buy a Testament, and I took it home and taught my mother her letters, and now she can read any chapter in the Bible, and has ever since attended the chapel.'"



BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF THE REV. DR. MILNE,

*Late Missionary to China.*

From the London Evangelical Magazine: Communicated by an intimate friend of Dr. M.

Mr. Milne was born in 1785. His father dying while he was a child, he became dependent on a relative, who was very attentive to the temporal concerns of his family, but whose example proved very pernicious to the morals of our young friend. He soon manifested a talent for wit and satire, and prided himself on excelling in coining new oaths. He was so much given to quarrelling and fighting, that he became a terror to all around him, and was distinguished by the name *Satan*. When between twelve and thirteen years of age, being in the service of a farmer in Rhynie, he one evening entered the barn where he and his fellow servants slept, and found John D—— at prayer. As the relative before mentioned prided himself upon his witty scoffs at those who manifested a regard to vital religion, he made himself merry with the thoughts of having an opportunity of holding up this individual to ridicule; but on his bed he reflected, if such a sober young man as John D—— need to pray, how much more such a blasphemer as I! These reflections brought him to his knees to cry for mercy. Every one was now surprised at his sedateness: he put off his habit of swearing: dreaded every approach to falsehood: became peaceable and obliging, and attentive to every thing entrusted to him. He often spent hours in secret prayer among his fleecy companions—the sheep. He left Rhynie for Gartley, where he became acquainted with A. S. a pious man, whose religious instruction and family worship he attended every evening. He began to delight in reading religious books, always carrying one with him when he went with the cattle to the pasture. At this early period, his remarks were often striking and impressive. A young woman, a sister of his master's, stated, that while he was living with her brother, she had often observed that he retired from the family a considerable time before he went to bed, and determining to trace him to the place of his resort, she found him earnestly engaged in prayer for her conversion. She added, that she was so mischievous as to cast some water upon him. He very mildly said, "Poor Charlotte, and do you never pray? O woman, think, now is the time to pray *with success*." She said, "I

shall never pray." "Well," he replied, "the time is hastening when you must pray; but how awful will it be if your first prayer be to the rocks and hills to fall upon you, and hide you from the face of the Lamb." She told me she should never forget his words and manner. He attended the preaching of the gospel at C—— and H——, and was an attentive and devotional hearer. Such was the change wrought in his outward conduct, that even the careless world bore testimony in his favor.

He was apprenticed to Mr. R. in the parish of K——, to learn the business of a house-carpenter. His master was surprised at his dexterity, and declared that he could trust him with all he had. Upon being interrogated by a pious character on the state of his family with regard to religion, he said that his men in general like himself were indifferent to it, but that one apprentice (meaning Mr. Milne) was determined to be religious.

A gentleman, who was overseer of General Huy's estate during Mr. Milne's apprenticeship, once sent him a card of invitation to a harvest supper and ball; stating that although he did not approve of balls in general, yet as he had invited none but respectable persons, he thought there could be no harm in the evening's amusement. Mr. Milne acknowledged his attention, but declared he could not admit any thing to be harmless that tended to feed the vanity of the mind, and estrange it from God; adding, "when I have got nothing to do for eternity, then I will attend your supper and ball." This answer struck the gentleman so forcibly, that he would have been glad to have excused himself from being present, and never after attended such assemblies.

For some time before his mind was directed to the missionary work, he taught in Sabbath Schools. He often complained of his unfitness for the office of teacher, but he was nevertheless greatly esteemed in that capacity. His addresses to the children were uncommonly interesting, and highly calculated to arrest attention and produce conviction. On one occasion, speaking of the folly of putting off the care of the soul to a future time, he said, "What, if the time you fix upon should be the day after your death—or months, yea, years after your state is fixed for eternity? how will this torture your minds in everlasting burnings? O be persuaded that Satan tempts you to delay, that he may work your everlasting destruction. The Spirit of God determines the mind not to loiter a moment on the brink of everlasting ruin. Many, now wailing and gnashing their teeth in the burning lake, no doubt once resolved, that at a future time they would mind religion in earnest; but before that time arrived, they were arrested by death, and hurried unprepared into the presence of God." On another occasion, speaking of the causes of neglect of salvation, he said, "Can you suppose that religion will rob you of pleasure—it will, indeed, make you despise those vain pleasures that estrange the heart from God, and end in misery—but I dare appeal to all who have experienced the power of religion, if ever they tasted true pleasure before they knew and embraced Christ and his salvation." Once, speaking of the madness of such as gave up their minds to the world and sin, "How do you debase your immortal souls! You rise no higher than brutes.

Think, what shall I do when I am robbed of all these enjoyments? The time is hastening when you shall see all on which you depend for happiness enveloped in flames; then what will you have to live upon through eternity? No wonder you dread death, judgment, and eternity. O learn to live upon God himself! Then in the wreck of worlds you can say, "*I have lost nothing.*" He was in the habit of praying with those whom he visited, often conversing with them on the concerns of their souls. He often exhorted, even with tears, and prayed with his relative, already alluded to, and charged me, the last time I saw him, saying, "Oh! for the Lord's sake, attend to my poor \*\*\*\*\*; visit him—pray with him—the Lord may yet have mercy upon him."

When he was proceeding to Gosport, to enter upon his studies, he remarked, "What a wonder am I to myself! Surely the Lord has magnified the riches of his grace to me above any of the fallen race. You know what a mischievous youth I always was. Surely I have the greatest cause to sing, 'Oh, to grace how great a debtor, &c."

Among other questions put to him, on his application to be sent to Gosport, he was asked how long he had resolved the subject in his mind, and what was the reason he did not apply sooner? In answer to these questions, he replied, "that it had been matter of serious consideration with him for four years, and that he had been all that time endeavoring to make a provision for his widowed mother and his sisters." In pursuance of this design, by his own industry, in the course of four years, he procured on a long lease a piece of ground sufficient to feed two cows. On this ground he built a house, doing all the mason's and carpenter's work with his own hands; enclosed a sufficient quantity for a garden, and purchased the cows and the other stock necessary for this humble establishment. I know not which most to admire, in this instance, his concern for the honor of religion, his filial affection, or the high notions he had of the duties of a missionary. "If I leave my mother and sisters unprovided for," said he, "the cause of missions will be reproached, through my conduct in a foreign land and separated from her. Should I ever be tempted to doubt my call to the missionary work, this consideration may add to these doubts; and the distraction this reflection might occasion, may interrupt my labors, and prevent me from being able to devote myself so entirely to God, as my duties as a missionary may require."

On his first appearance for examination before the Committee at Aberdeen, which used to meet at the house of our estimable chairman, Dr. Ross, Mr. Milne's first appearance was so rustic and unpromising, that a worthy member of the Committee took me aside, and expressed his doubts whether he had the necessary qualifications for a missionary; adding, that he could not recommend him *as a missionary*, but that he would have no objections to join in recommending him to go as a servant to a mission, provided he would be willing to engage in that capacity. At the suggestion of my worthy friend, I desired to speak with him alone. Having stated to him the objection which had been made, and asked him whether he would consent to the proposal; he replied, without hesitation, and with the most significant and animated expression of countenance, "Yes, sir, most certainly; I am willing to be anything, so that I am in the work. To be a 'hewer of wood, and a drawer of water,' is too great an honor for me when the Lord's house is building."

The question being put to him by one of the Committee, (probably with a view to ascertain his sentiments,) whether a young man could have a call from God to engage in such a work, unless his heart were full of ardent love to the Saviour; he made the following reply: "I cannot say, sir, what it may be with others; but if my call to the missionary work is to be decided by such a state of mind as you have described, I have no hesitation in saying, that I have not yet been called to that work. I feel no rapture, and when I compare the state of my heart with the character of the Saviour, I am often tempted to question whether I yet really love him or not."

It has been said that Sunday Schools were principally useful in rescuing the children of poverty and vice from ruin; in collecting the little outcasts of society, the idle, wretched wanderers in our streets and alleys, and bringing them within the sound of that gospel which to the poor is preached; and therefore there has sometimes existed an idea of degradation and abandonment connected with sending children to these blessed institutions. Sunday School instruction is like that holy gospel whence it is derived. It extends its blessings equally and impartially to all classes in the whole world of sinners. It carries light, and pardon, and peace, and comfort to the abodes of ignorance, and guilt, and sorrow, and at the same time ennobles and enriches with heavenly treasures, the children of science, refinement, and affluence. It is part of the glory of this institution, that it searches out the wretched, neglected, and forsaken, and gathers them up from the "highways and hedges," and carries them to the Savior's feet—but its brightest glory is found in diffusing its blessings wherever depravity and guilt are found, among the children of men. If the children of the rich possess the same sinful nature, are exposed to the same wrath, and need the same pardoning mercy with those of the poor and degraded, then the same system of means which is designed for the latter, must not, by the former, be disdained or undervalued.

It has been said that this institution has no great claims upon the attention of churches because the children of religious people are well instructed at home. In reply to this I would observe, that if all the children who are regularly and faithfully instructed at home were excluded, your schools might be filled to overflowing, though their number were doubled. But I venture to declare that nothing can be more false than the opinion that these efforts are useless to those who are faithfully taught by their parents.

Among the most enlightened and devoted Christians and clergymen of my acquaintance, who have sent their children to Sunday Schools, I have found but one sentiment, and that one of the most lively gratitude for the evident advantages derived by their children from this privilege. I have no hesitation to declare my settled conviction, that Sunday school instruction is to children, what the preaching of the word of God is to adults. And I have little doubt that this very institution will be principally instrumental in spreading the triumphs of redemption, in raising up a generation of devoted Christians, and in introducing the era of millennial glory.—*Dr. Keland*

## WISDOM.

*From the Bible Catechism by W. F. Lloyd.*

**Q.** How did Solomon pray for wisdom?

**A.** I am but a little child, I know not how to go out or come in; give therefore thy servant an understanding heart.

**Q.** Does St. James direct us to pray for wisdom?

**A.** If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.

**Q.** What is the beginning of wisdom?

**A.** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his commandment.

**Q.** Is self-conceit opposed to wisdom?

**A.** Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. Be not wise in thine own eyes, fear the Lord, and depart from evil. Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit; there is more hope of a fool than of him.

**Q.** What is the wisdom of the world with God?

**A.** The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

**Q.** Does true wisdom promote happiness?

**A.** Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding; for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

**Q.** Is wisdom of the utmost importance?

**A.** Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding.

**Q.** Do wise children promote their parents' comfort?

**A.** A wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son despiseth his mother. The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice, and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him.

**Q.** Is a state of ignorance evil?

**A.** That the soul be without knowledge it is not good.

**Q.** Is the "virtuous woman" wise?

**A.** She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

**Q.** Is a poor and wise child estimable?

**A.** Better is a poor and wise child than an old and foolish king, who will be no more admonished.

**Q.** Are we required to blend gentleness with wisdom?

**A.** Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

**A.** What description of wisdom does St. Paul recommend to the Romans?

**A.** I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.

**Q.** How are Christians required to act towards unbelievers?

**A.** Walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time.



## THE SABBATH SCHOLAR IN THE PRISON AT DUBLIN.

In the division which fell to the lot of the writer of this, there were two old men, two younger ones, a lad, and a desperate hardened wretch, whose whole employment was to mock and ridicule. One of the old men, though he read but indifferently, appeared particularly attentive, and anxious for religious instruction, and was more than once observed wiping away the bitter tear which started down his hardy cheek. Thinking that he would improve better under a more experienced person, I handed him over to one who was well qualified to feed him with spiritual food.\* In regard to the troublesome youth mentioned above, I at first considered him a hopeless case; he pretended he could not read, but I discovered that he read better than any of them. He endeavored to pick my pockets, and to pull my coat whenever I happened to turn round, and stuck me with pins more than once. I bore it all patiently, and, instead of causing him to be punished, (as I might have done) I expostulated with him on the folly and wickedness of his ways. I also gave him two or three suitable tracts, which he promised to read.

Cold weather coming on, he had no coat or shoes—a common sight in the prison, where some indeed were almost naked. I promised him an old coat and a pair of shoes, if he would but become more attentive. The bribe was too tempting to refuse; and after two or three weeks of probation, I sent him the coat and shoes. He continued promising for some time, but there was nothing in his conduct which could induce a person to hope for a total reformation. It is the duty of teachers, when they meet with such a scholar, to present him in fervent prayer before the throne of grace; yet at the same time, to watch over him, and lose no opportunity of communicating suitable advice. This was the method adopted on the occasion, and I trust it was not unavailing. However the time of his confinement expired, and he was released. Shortly after, I myself had occasion to leave town; and after my return, having been reading the whole day, I went out in the evening to enjoy a walk. Whether from the effects of study, or owing to some trial I was then under, my spirits were unusually low. I proceeded along one of the public roads for some time, but the noise and bustle not suiting my then melancholy temper, I turned up a narrow private road, shaded by trees on both sides, and interspersed here and there with neat white-washed cottages. On passing one of them, I heard the clacking noise of a busy loom, and the jocund, yet innocent song of a light-hearted weaver. When I had passed about fifty paces, the door opened, and a neatly dressed young man called after me by name. Not recognizing him, I did not attend to him, but proceeded. He ran after me, and stopped me. I looked at him. "Do you not know me, Sir?" said he. "No, indeed I do not." "Do you not recollect your scholar at Newgate, James —?" I eyed him from head to foot; but the neatly combed hair, the clean face, new shirt and ribbon, the plain and comfortable suit of clothes and shoes, had so metamorphosed him, that it was with difficulty I could recognize him. Taking me most affectionately by the hand, and with tears in his eyes, he said, "Sir, I saw you passing

by, and could not refrain from coming out to ask your pardon for all my unkindness to you; and to thank you for all that you and the other young gentlemen said to me while in Newgate. It was a sad place, but I thank God that ever I was put into it. I will count that day the happiest in my life. I should have been now, perhaps, living in wickedness, and probably have come to the gallows at last. When I got out, I was friendless, and without a home. But reflecting on what was often told me in Newgate, that Christ is the friend of sinners, and ever willing to receive the vilest, I prayed to him to support and assist me. I shuddered at the idea of going to rob and pilfer again, and determined to *work*. I got some work, and got some clothes too, and I have now employment enough at this cottage, with my food and bed, and I pass away my time very happily."

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The superintendent of a Sunday School in Bristol, discoursing lately with the children, asked, among other things, "Where is God?" One of the elder boys answered, "In heaven." The teacher not appearing satisfied with this reply, again repeated the inquiry, when a lad, younger than the other, answered, "Every where." Requiring still further explanation, the question was again put, "Where is God?" when a third boy, (thinking no doubt that he could improve on the answer already given,) most cheerfully called out, "God is here." The views of the superintendent were now met, and he endeavored to impress upon the minds of the children, the important truth, that "God is in heaven—God is every where—God is here."

A QUAKER residing at Paris, was waited on by four of his workmen in order to make their compliments, and ask for their usual new-year's gifts. "Well, my friends," said the Quaker, "here are your gifts; choose fifteen francs or the Bible." "I don't know how to read," said the first, "so I take the fifteen francs." "I can read," said the second, "but I have pressing wants." He took the fifteen francs. The third also made the same choice. He now came to the fourth, a young lad about thirteen or fourteen. The Quaker looked at him with an air of goodness. "Will you too take these three pieces, which you may obtain at any time by your labor and industry?" "As you say the book is good, I will take it, and read from it to my mother," replied the boy. He took the Bible, opened it, and found between the leaves a gold piece of forty francs. The others hung down their heads, and the Quaker told them he was sorry they had not made a better choice.

On a very warm Sunday afternoon in August, a boy in one of our Sunday schools fell asleep during public worship. According to the rules of the school this misfortune subjected the little fellow to the forfeiture of a *ticket*, which, at the close of the service, the teacher very punctually demanded. The boy having given up his hard earned reward of former good behaviour, was allowed to go home. As he was passing out of the church, his teacher experienced a sharp reproof by overhearing the sleepy lad remark to a school fellow—"I wonder my teacher took away my ticket for being asleep, when he slept himself all sermon time!"—*S. S. Magazine.*